

# ICPS newsletter®

## Civil servants should know how to analyze policy

*Developing the civil service as an institution remains a problem in Ukraine. The quality of work of the current bureaucracy does not meet the needs of a democratic society. One of the key reasons for this is the poor qualifications of government workers. The International Centre for Policy Studies is engaged actively in this area, among others, through the "Developing Management Training Aids for Government Officials" project, funded by the Polish-Ukrainian Cooperation Foundation (PAUCI). So far, ICPS analysts have developed policy analysis training aids. The handbooks that were prepared for trainees and trainers are expected to help improve managerial and policy analysis skills among Ukraine's civil servants*

### What is policy analysis?

Public policy analysis is an area of professional activity that is new for Ukraine. In Ukrainian terminology, there is a confusion around the use of the concepts "policy" and "politics" because the Ukrainian language uses one word for both concepts, *polityka*, whereas other languages, for example, the English language, use two words, *policy* and *politics*.

*Politics* is the mutual relations among various groups and individuals regarding the use of government institutions to actualize socially meaningful interests and needs. In this sense, politics is studied and analyzed mainly by political scientists.

*Policy* is a plan or a line of action that has been approved and enacted by a government, a political leader or a political party. The word "policy" is used in this specific meaning when we speak about government policy in its various manifestations: domestic, foreign,

economic, social, and so on. As a line of action, policy is subject to policy analysis.

### How to develop policies

The cycle of developing and implementing policies can be described using the model below.

The first stage of the government policy-making process begins with **identifying an issue or problem**. Identifying the problem is closely related to policy goals: what this policy is trying to achieve and what its goals and objectives are. There are many ways to evaluate policy, but the most important one is its success in achieving the set goals.

**Setting an agenda**, that is, identifying those social issues that the Government plans to examine and resolve, is the most important stage of the government policy-making process. Among thousands of claims on the Government, only a small portion will be seriously examined by those who develop

policies. In other words, to gain a place on the agenda, a social issue must become one issue that grabs the attention of the Government.

**Formulating government policy** is the process of developing policy proposals or policy alternatives regarding the issues on the agenda. Choosing one of several alternatives is an important stage both in the policy-making process and in policy analysis and consists of several sub-stages:

- identifying the most obvious alternatives and finding hidden ones that need identifying;
- formulating clear-cut alternatives;
- comparing them using a broad range of criteria (both political and technical) and analytical tools;
- discovering the best alternative or several possible alternatives for the decision-making process.

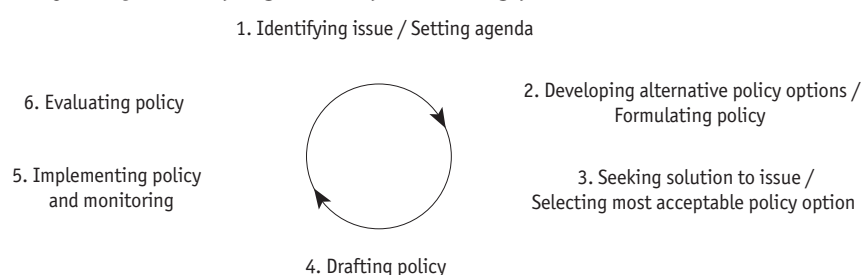
Here, it becomes critical that government officials work with all stakeholders. Unlike soviet times, when stakeholder positions (other than The Party) were not taken into account, today, this activity is a key policy-making step.

**Selecting the most acceptable policy option.** After developing alternatives to deal with a specific issue, the most acceptable policy option must be chosen. This option should reflect the positions of stakeholders and meet the needs of a specific situation to the greatest degree possible. Government officials then draft specific recommendations and present them to their higher-ups.

### How to implement and evaluate a specific policy

**Drafting the policy.** Once the most acceptable option has been chosen, it should become government policy. Now,

### The cycle of developing and implementing policies



government bodies have to decide how they can implement a given policy in the most effective manner. In order to develop a workable policy model, the government body should choose a combination of suitable policy instruments (for example, legislative, organizational or systemic support) and organizations to implement this policy (for example, government or non-government, public or private organizations).

#### **Implementing the policy and monitoring.**

Policy is implemented according to a standard model. As a rule, a balance between good policy drafting and successful policy implementation gives the most promising results. Ongoing monitoring after a policy has been instituted provides the foundation for a comprehensive evaluation process based on numerous data sources.

**Evaluating the policy** is the final stage of the government policy-making process, when those who developed a particular policy check whether their policy or program has achieved its goals, who lost or won as a result of its implementation, and what expected and unexpected impact it had on society as a whole.

#### **Policy-making is not a linear process**

The effectiveness of the evaluation process lies in clear, objective research into current and long-term policy impact for targeted and non-targeted situations or groups of clients. It also includes an evaluation of the correlation between current and long-term costs, and any identified benefits. Thus, evaluating government policy provides feedback and identifies new problems—effectively the beginning of a new round in the government policy-making process.

Policy-making is a cycle, not a linear process. Its various stages are frequently implemented in parallel, shortening one another. Moreover, various political players and institutions can be simultaneously involved in various processes that are taking place in a given policy area.

As to policy analysis, it can be carried out at one, several or all stages of the policy-making process. The purpose of policy analysis is to gather, critically evaluate and combine the necessary information about one or more stages of the policy-making process.

#### **The nature of policy issues**

When looking into the nature of policy issues, government officials should bear in mind some of their typical features:

1. Policy issues in one area frequently affect issues in other areas. For example, economic problems such as inflation, foreign or domestic debt, low productivity, have a social impact, such as poverty, unemployment and high mortality.
2. Problematic situations such as ozone holes, child labor, exploitation of the disabled and immigrants, and poverty are frequently recognized as problems not by those who directly suffer from them, but by others—specialists, researchers, journalists, human rights advocates, and politicians—who recognize them as a threat to society.
3. It is very difficult to identify the nature and scale of certain social problems, such as homelessness, unemployment, illegal immigrants, homeless children, and “shadow” incomes, because they are tangled and “invisible” (their scale, categorization by age and sex). As an evaluation of the problem can prove inaccurate, policy-makers frequently find themselves uncertain about the scale of a problem and possible solutions.
4. One more feature specific to policy issues is their malleability to resolution. Some issues require far fewer behavioral changes than others. For example, it is much easier to adopt new, democratic electoral legislation than to actually run free, fair and just elections. The malleability of issues is also affected by their visibility or invisibility. Improving the resources and work of individuals or agencies can alleviate evident problems, such as job shortages, housing problems and overcrowded prisons. But money alone cannot resolve hidden problems, such as inappropriate professional skills, despair and suicides. ■

*The goal of the “Developing Management Training Aids for Government Officials” project is to improve the capacity of government officials for public policy development in a democratic environment. In addition to the training aid, ICPS specialists developed another document called “Regulatory Impact Analysis.”*

*For additional information, contact Oleksandr Safin by tel. at (380-44) 484-4400 or via e-mail at [osafin@icps.kiev.ua](mailto:osafin@icps.kiev.ua).*

#### **“Reforms, Business and Policy” poll presented and discussed**

On 22 June 2007, the International Center for Policy Studies held a roundtable called “Rehabilitating Kurkuls: Legitimizing Conservative Ideology in Ukraine.”

At the event, a nationwide poll on “Reforms, Business and Policy,” commissioned by the International Center for Policy Studies, supported by the Institute of Sociology under the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), and carried out by the Socis Center, was presented and discussed.

The ICPS analysis of the survey revealed a number of contradictory trends: Ukrainians are market-oriented and they are linking their future and the future of their country as a whole with the development of entrepreneurship. At the same time, people are holding on to soviet stereotypes about property, business and social justice. On one hand, they believe that private business is the only player having all basic resources necessary to carry out reforms, yet they admit that it lacks support from the public.

Well-known politicians, policy-makers, entrepreneurs, and experts took part in the roundtable. Vira Naniivska, Honorary Chair of the ICPS Supervisory Board and President of the National Academy of Public Administration under the President of Ukraine, moderated the roundtable.

#### **By the way...**

Over 11–15 June, ICPS Director Volodymyr Nikitin visited the Kyrgyz Republic to run training seminars for local non-government organizations in Bishkek.

Over 7–8 June, ICPS Director Volodymyr Nikitin delivered a lecture on policy analysis for staff at the Ministry of Transport as part of the “Developing Management Training Aids for Government Officials” project.

On 5 June, ICPS Political Analysis and Security Programs Director Viktor Chumak participated in a roundtable called “The EU and Ukraine—Reform of the Migration Policy,” where he made a presentation called “Ukraine’s Legislative Base on Legal and Illegal Migration.”

**icps newsletter** is a weekly publication of the International Centre for Policy Studies, delivered by electronic mail. To be included in the distribution list, mail your request to: [marketing@icps.kiev.ua](mailto:marketing@icps.kiev.ua).

**icps newsletter** editor: Olha Lvova ([olvova@icps.kiev.ua](mailto:olvova@icps.kiev.ua))  
Phone: (380-44) 484-4400. Fax: (380-44) 484-4402  
English text editor: L.A. Wolanskyj  
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The International Centre for Policy Studies is an independent research organization whose mandate is to promote the introduction of public policy concepts and practices in Ukraine. This is achieved by increasing the know-how of key government officials for policy choices, formulation and debate, and the awareness of the public-at-large of the benefits of policy.

Address: vul. Pymonenka 13A, Kyiv, Ukraine 04050  
Web-site: <http://www.icps.com.ua/eng/>